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## SEVENTH ANNUAL REPORT OF THE SECRETARY OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION.

[Continued from page 152.]

When a difficult question has been put to a young child, which tasks all his energies, the teacher approaches him with a mingled look of concern and encouragement; he stands before him, the light and shade of hope and fear alternately crossing his countenance; he lifts his arms and turns his body,—as a bowler who has given a wrong direction to his bowl will writh his person to bring the ball back upon its track;—and finally, if the little wrestler with difficulty triumphs, the teacher felicitates him upon his success, perhaps seizes and shakes him by the hand, in token of congratulation; and, when the difficulty has been really formidable, and the effort triumphant, I have seen the teacher catch up the child in his arms and embrace him, as though he were not able to contain his joy. At another time, I have seen a teacher actually clap his hands with delight at a bright reply; and all this has been done so naturally and so unaffectedly as to excite no other feeling in the residue of the children than a desire, by the same means, to win the same caresses. What person worthy of being called by the name, or of sustaining the sacred relation of a parent, would not give anything, bear anything, sacrifice anything, to have his children, during eight or ten years of the period of their childhood, surrounded by circumstances, and breathed upon by sweet and humanizing influences, like these!

I mean no disparagement of our own teachers by the remark I am about to make. As a general fact, these teachers are as good as public opinion has demanded; as good as the public sentiment has been disposed to appreciate; as good as public liberality has been ready to reward; as good as the preliminary measures taken to qualify them would authorize us to expect. But it was impossible to put down the questionings of my own mind,—whether a visiter could spend six weeks in our own schools without ever hearing an angry word spoken, or seeing a blow struck, or witnessing the flow of tears.

In the Prussian schools, I observed the fair operation and full result of two practices which I have dwelt upon with great repetition and urgency at home. One is, when hearing a class

recite, always to ask the question before naming the scholar who is to give the answer. The question being first asked, all the children are alert, for each one knows that he is liable to be called upon for the reply. On the contrary, if the scholar who is expected to answer is first named, and especially if the scholars are taken in succession, according to local position,—that is, in the order of their seats or stations,—then the attention of all the rest has a reprieve, until their turns shall come. In practice, this designation of the answerer before the question is propounded, operates as a temporary leave of absence, or furlough, to all the other members of the class.

The other point referred to is that of adjusting the ease or difficulty of the questions to the capacity of the pupil. A child should never have any excuse or occasion for making a mistake; nay, at first he should be most carefully guarded from the fact, and especially from the consciousness of making a mistake. The questions should be ever so childishly simple, rather than that the answers should be erroneous. No expense of time can be too great, if it secures the habit and the desire of accuracy. Hence a false answer should be an event of the rarest occurrence,—one to be deprecated, to be looked upon with surprise and regret, and almost as an offence. Few things can have a worse effect upon a child's character than to set down a row of black marks against him, at the end of every lesson.

The value of this practice of adjusting questions to the capacities and previous attainments of the pupils, cannot be over-estimated. The opposite course *necessitates* mistakes, habituates and hardens the pupils to blundering and uncertainty, disparages the value of correctness in their eyes; and,—what is a consequence as much to be lamented as any,—gives plausibility to the argument in favor of emulation as a means of bringing children back to the habit of accuracy from which they have been driven. Would the trainer of horses deserve any compensation, or have any custom, if the first draughts which he should impose upon the young animals were beyond their ability to move?

The first of the above-named practices can be adopted by every teacher, immediately, and whatever his degree of competency in other respects may be. The last improvement cannot be fully effected until the teacher can dispense with all text-books, and can teach and question from a full mind only. The case is hopeless, where a conspiracy against the spread of knowledge has been entered into between an author who compiles, and a teacher who uses, a text-book, in which the questions to be put are all prepared and printed.

In former reports, I have dwelt at length upon the expediency of employing female teachers, to a greater extent, in our schools. Some of the arguments in favor of this change have been, the greater intensity of the parental instinct in the female sex, their natural love of the society of children, and the superior gentleness and forbearance of their dispositions,—all of which lead them to mildness rather than severity, to the use of hope

rather than of fear as a motive of action, and to the various arts of encouragement rather than to annoyances and compulsion, in their management of the young. These views have been responded to and approved by almost all the school committee men in the State; and, within the last few years, the practice of the different districts has been rapidly conforming to this theory. I must now say that those views are calculated only for particular meridians. In those parts of Germany which I have seen, they would not be understood. No necessity for them could be perceived. There, almost all teachers, for the youngest children as well as for the oldest, are men. Two or three times, I saw a female teacher in a private school; but none in a public, unless for teaching knitting, needle-work, &c. Yet in these male teachers, there was a union of gentleness and firmness that left little to be desired.

Still, in almost every German school into which I entered, I inquired whether corporal punishment were allowed or used, and I was uniformly answered in the affirmative. But it was further said, that, though all teachers had liberty to use it, yet cases of its occurrence were very rare, and these cases were confined almost wholly to young scholars. Until the teacher had time to establish the relation of affection between himself and the new-comer into his school, until he had time to create that attachment which children always feel towards any one who, day after day, supplies them with novel and pleasing ideas, it was occasionally necessary to restrain and punish them. But after a short time, a love of the teacher and a love of knowledge become a substitute,—how admirable a one!—for punishment. When I asked my common question of Dr. Vogel, of Leipsic, he answered, that it was still used in the schools of which he had the superintendence. “But,” added he, “thank God, it is used less and less, and when we teachers become fully competent to our work, it will cease altogether.”

To the above I may add, that I found all the teachers whom I visited, alive to the subject of improvement. They had libraries of the standard works on education,—works of which there are such great numbers in the German language. Every new book of any promise was eagerly sought after; and I uniformly found the educational periodicals of the day upon the tables of the teachers. From the editor of one of these periodicals, I learned that more than thirty of this description are printed in Germany; and that the obscurest teacher in the obscurest village is usually a subscriber to one or more.

A feeling of deep humiliation overcame me, as I contrasted this state of things with that in my own country, where of all the numerous educational periodicals which have been undertaken within the last twenty years, only two, of any length of standing, still survive. All the others have failed through the indifference of teachers, and the apathy of the public. One of the remaining two,—that conducted by F. Dwight, Esq., of Albany, N. Y.,—would probably have failed ere this, had not the Legislature of the State generously come to its rescue, by subscribing for twelve thousand copies,—one to be sent to each

district school in that great State. The other paper, as it is well known, has never reimbursed to its editor his actual expenses in conducting it.

The extensive range and high grade of instruction which so many of the German youth are enjoying, and these noble qualifications on the part of their instructors, are the natural and legitimate result of their seminaries for teachers. Without the latter, the former never could have been, any more than an effect without its cause. Although "the first regular seminary for teachers," (see Dr. Bache's report, page 222,) "was established at Stettin, in Pomerania, in 1735," yet it was not until within the last quarter of a century, and especially since the general pacification of Europe, that the system has made such rapid advances towards perfection. And so powerfully has this system commended itself to all enlightened men, that not only have these seminaries for teachers been constantly increasing in Prussia, in Saxony, and in the states of the west and southwest of Germany, but most of the enlightened governments of Europe have followed the example. Out of Prussia, the plan was first adopted in Holland. The celebrated Normal School of Mr. Prinsen was established at Haarlem, in 1816; and it is now acknowledged by all, that Common School education has been reformed and immeasurably advanced throughout the whole of that enlightened country, by the influence of this school.

When that great governmental measure for the establishment of Common Schools throughout France was adopted, in 1833, one of its main features was the creation of Normal Schools. At these institutions, young men are not only educated, but gratuitously maintained; they enjoy certain civil privileges, are exempted from military service, and if they acquitted themselves worthily, they are certain of an appointment as a school-teacher at the end of their course.

It is a fact most interesting in itself, and worthy to be cited as one of the proofs of the advancement, (however slow,) of the race, that the Normal School now in successful operation at Versailles, occupies the very site,—some of its buildings are the very buildings, and its beautiful grounds the very grounds,—which were the dog-kennels of Louis XIV. and his royal successors.\*

Scotland, so long and so justly celebrated among the countries of Europe for the superior education of its people, was not slow to discover the advantages of schools for the preparation of teachers. It has now one such school at Edinburgh, and one at Glasgow, besides the Madras College at St. Andrews, which exercises the double function of giving a classical education, and of preparing teachers for schools.

Under the enlightened administration of the National Board of Education for Ireland, a Normal School has been established

\* A fact kindred to the one mentioned in the text, is, that, at Florence, an edifice once used by the Inquisition is now occupied by an Infant School. How different these uses. A dog-kennel and a Normal School! A Pandemonium and an Infant School!

at Dublin, and placed upon the most liberal basis.\* Excellent buildings, with large and beautiful yards and playgrounds, are provided for it, in the very heart of the city. Here hundreds of the poor children are in constant attendance, to whom instruction is given, in part by professional teachers, and in part by the pupils of the Normal School. The Normal pupils reside at a place called Glasnevin, a little way out of the city. Here they have a farm, which is conducted by a scientific agriculturist. When not engaged at the school in the city, the pupils are occupied on the farm. At this Normal School, none but actual teachers are received. They leave their own schools and come from all parts of Ireland to receive instruction here. Their whole maintenance,—tuition, board, lodging,—is gratuitous; and a certain sum is secured to them annually on their return to their schools. More than a thousand teachers have already availed themselves of the benefits of this noble charity.

Though the government of England has declined to follow the example of all the enlightened nations of Europe, yet private individuals and societies are striving to remedy, to some extent, the consequences of this neglect. A Normal School established under the auspices of that enlightened educationist, Mr. Kay Shuttleworth, is now in successful operation at Battersea; and the church party have recently purchased and fitted up, at an expense of \$100,000, a Normal School at Chelsea, near London.

After the revolution of 1830, which separated Belgium from Holland, the former country neglected its schools, and since that period, it seems to be acknowledged, on all hands, that the education of the Belgian people has been rapidly retrograding. But by virtue of a recent law, (Sept. 23, 1842,) an entire school system is now organizing for that country. Under the new order of things, there are to be two Normal Schools, one at Lierre in the Province of Antwerp, and the other at Nivelles in the Province of Brabant.

Even at St. Petersburg, in Russia, says Professor Stowe, "a model school for the education of teachers of every grade, and for all parts of the empire," has been established. Thus it appears that almost every member of the great European family of nations, which possesses any claims to be called enlightened or civilized, has looked with favor upon what may be considered one of the greatest of all modern instrumentalities for the improvement of the race; and has either founded this class of institutions by the direct authority and endowment of the government itself, or has allowed and encouraged the same thing to be done by the liberal and philanthropic portion of its people. One empire alone has signalized its name by an opposite course. That empire is Austria. Although the Austrian government maintains what it calls a system of schools, yet they are schools which set metes and bounds, on all sides, to the development of the human faculties;—although it prepares a few teachers, yet it is the office of these teachers to lop and

\* Lord Morpeth gave £1000 towards establishing this school.

prune the common mind, and not to develop it;—and when, during the very year previous to my visit, in a part of that empire bordering upon the kingdom of Saxony,—across whose frontier a little of the light and genial warmth of education had been reflected,—a few of the more enlightened subjects of that arbitrary power applied to it for liberty to establish a Normal school within their own province, and offered to supply, gratuitously, the money requisite for the purpose, both the application and the offer were rejected with indignity. Austria, impenetrable Austria, over which the black horizon of despotism shuts down, like a cover, excluding, as far as possible, all light, intelligence and knowledge,—Austria, true to the base and cowardly instincts of ignorance and bigotry, disallows the establishment of a free Normal school for the improvement of its people, and spurns the proffered munificence of the noble benefactors who would endow it!\*

#### SCHOOL INSPECTORS.

The extraordinary system of measures by which the Prussian schools have been elevated and are now sustained, would not be understood, without taking into view the office and character of the School Inspectors. The kingdom is divided into circles or districts; and for each one of these, there is one or more school commissioners or inspectors. These officers have some duties like those of our town school committees, but their functions more nearly resemble those of the Deputy Super-

\* To show the change of public feeling, on this side of the Atlantic, in regard to Normal Schools, we quote the two following sections from a law lately enacted by the Canadian Legislature:

“57. And be it enacted, that it shall and may be lawful for the Court of Wardens of any county in Upper Canada aforesaid, if they deem it proper so to do, to raise and levy by county rate, a sum not exceeding, in any year, two hundred pounds, and to appropriate and expend the same for the maintenance of one or more County Model Schools within such county, and to constitute by a by-law or by-laws to that effect any township, town or city school or schools within the county, to be, for any term not less than one year, such County Model School or Schools; provided always that by such by-law there shall be appropriated from the county rates for the payment of teachers and the purchase of books and apparatus, for each school during every year for which the same shall continue to be a County Model School, a sum not less than forty pounds.”

“63. And be it enacted, that at every such County Model School gratuitous instruction shall be afforded to all teachers of Common Schools within the county wherein such Model School may be established, during such periods and under such regulations as the County Superintendent may from time to time direct.”

It may not be known to all our readers that the State of New York, in 1835, engrafted a department for the instruction of teachers, upon several of the principal academies, in the different counties of the State, and made an appropriation for their support. These Teachers' Departments were intended to supersede the necessity of Normal Schools, by accomplishing the same object,—the qualification of teachers,—in another way. But they have been gradually declining in public estimation, and in the last Report of Colonel Young,—the zealous and enlightened Superintendent of Common Schools for the State of New York,—he pronounces the whole to be “a system which has, to a great extent, been a failure.” He speaks of Normal Schools in the following terms:

“In the last annual report from this Department, the subject of Normal Schools was brought before the Legislature; and it was proposed that the money bestowed on sixteen academies, for the purpose of sustaining teachers' departments, should be divided into four parts of \$1,200 each, and applied to the establishment of four Normal Schools, to be connected with four academies in different sections of the

intendents appointed for each county in the State of New York,—the latter being required by law to visit and examine all the schools in their respective counties, summer and winter, and make report of their condition to the State Superintendent.

By visiting schools, attending examinations, and by personal introduction, I saw many of this class of magistrates. They had evidently been selected from among the most talented and educated men in the community. They were such men as would here be appointed as presidents or professors of colleges, judges of the higher courts, or called to other civil stations for which talent, attainment and character are deemed essential pre-requisites. The office is one both of honor and emolument.

It is easy to see how efficient such a class of officers must have been in bringing up teachers to a high standard of qualifications, at the beginning; and in creating, at last, a self-motive, self-improving spirit among them. If examiners, inspectors, school committees,—or by whatever other name they may be called,—know little of geography, grammar, arithmetic, or the art of reading, the candidate who presents himself before them for examination, will feel no need of knowing more than they do; and a succession of ignorant and incompetent candidates will be sure to apply for schools in towns which have ignorant examiners. The whole Prussian system impressed me with a deep sense of the vast difference in the amount of general attainment and talent devoted to the cause of popular education in that country, as compared with any

State. In conformity with this suggestion, the Regents of the University withheld from the sixteen academies in which teachers' departments had been established, the sums which they had previously received. During the last season a very extensive correspondence with many individuals in respect to the establishment of these schools has been had, and numerous applications from academies to be selected for this purpose, have been made. The result of the examinations which, during the last year, have been made on this subject, has satisfactorily established the fact that four Normal Schools, although connected with academies, and subjected to no expense for rent, or for ordinary academic apparatus, cannot be established and maintained with an annual appropriation of \$1,200 to each. A first rate teacher in such an establishment cannot be procured short of \$1,500 a year: and it is believed that, at the commencement of the system, none but the very best should be employed. A different course might lead to a failure; and *thus one of the greatest improvements in modern times* might be indefinitely postponed."

"That a teacher of proper capacity and acquirements, thoroughly educated in a Normal School, can communicate more learning to his pupils in six months, than is usually communicated under the old system of teaching in double that period, is fully believed. If it were affirmed that a mechanic who had been carefully instructed in the theoretical and practical departments of his trade, could do twice as much work, and do it twice as well, as one who should assume that without previous discipline he was possessed of the trade by instinct, the affirmation could hardly fail to be credited. And is it not equally apparent that the educator, whose functions embrace in an eminent degree both art and science; who is required to study and to understand the different dispositions and propensities of the children committed to his care; to whose culture is confided the embryo blossoms of the mind; who is carefully to watch their daily growth, and to aid and accelerate their expansion, so that they may yield rich fruit in beauty and abundance; in short, who, in the incipient stage of its existence, is to attune the delicate and complicated chords of the human soul into the moral and intellectual harmonies of social life; is it not equally apparent that such a mission cannot be worthily performed without careful preparation?"

During the last year, the Trustees of the University of Alabama have engrrafted a Teachers' Department upon that institution.—*Ed.*

other country or state I had ever seen. I must refer to other sources, for information in regard to the municipal or parochial supervision of the schools, and can here only observe, that over all these intermediate functionaries is the Minister of Public Instruction. This officer is a member of the king's council. He takes rank with the highest officers in the government; sits at the council board of the nation with the minister of state, of war, of finance, &c., and his honors and emoluments are equal to theirs. He has no merely clerical duties to perform, and being relieved from all official drudgery, he can devote his time and his talents to the higher duties of his department. Such also has been the case in France, since the late organization of their system of public instruction.

In justice to Prussia, also, and as one of the explanations of the remarkable phenomena presented by her schools, the fact should not be omitted, that, before establishing her own school system, she commissioned agents to visit other countries to examine into theirs, in order that her own path might be illuminated by all the light that could be reflected upon it from other parts of the world.

#### SCHOOL ATTENDANCE.

One of the most signal features of the school system of Prussia and of many of the neighboring states, is the universality of the children's attendance. After a child has arrived at the legal age for attending school,—whether he be the child of noble or of peasant,—the only two *absolute* grounds of exemption from attendance, are sickness and death. The German language has a word for which we have no equivalent, either in language or in idea. The word is used in reference to children, and signifies *due to the school* ;—that is, when the legal age for going to school arrives, the right of the school to the child's attendance attaches, just as, with us, the right of a creditor to the payment of a note or bond attaches, on the day of its maturity. If a child, after having been once enrolled as a member of the school, absents himself from it; or if, after arriving at the legal age, he is not sent there by his parents, a notice in due form is sent to apprise them of the delinquency. If the child is not then forthcoming, a summons follows. The parent is cited before the court; and if he has no excuse and refuses compliance, the child is taken from him and sent to school, the father to prison.

From a pamphlet published by a director of the schools in Halle, I translate the following forms of notices and summonses, in order to give a more vivid idea of the manner in which this business is conducted.

#### (*Notice from the teacher to the parent.*)

We miss —— from the class, since —— without having received any intimation of the reasons of absence. We request you, therefore, to endorse the cause of absence on the back of this ticket, and to send your child, [or ward,] to school again.

Halle,

If the offence of absence without excuse is continued or is repeated, the register of the school is exhibited to the school director, who sends the following summons to the parent:

To ——,

We now present to you the list of school absences through the police. Your —— is found upon it. If you do not wish to be informed against, present yourself, at the latest, between the hours of —— and —— to the undersigned, with your excuses.

Halle,

If a valid excuse is not now forthcoming, the school director gives information of the case to the school inspector, who cites the delinquent parent before a magistrate, by the following warrant, which is put into the hands of a police officer, to be served.

— are hereby called upon to appear on — at — to be tried for the neglected school attendance of your child.

Halle, (Signed,) ——, *School Inspector.*

I had frequent conversations with school teachers and school officers respecting this compulsory attendance of the children. From these sources, I gathered the information that, with one exception, there was very little complaint about it, or opposition to it. Were it not that some of the children are compelled to receive instruction in a religious creed from which their parents dissent, there would rarely be a murmur of complaint in the community. The children are so fond of the school, the benefits of public instruction are now so universally acknowledged, and the whole public sentiment has become so conformed to the practice, that I believe there is quite as little complaint, (excepting on account of the invasion of religious freedom before referred to,) under the rigorous system of Prussia as under our lax one. One school officer, of whom I inquired whether this enforced school attendance were acceptable and popular, replied, that the people did not know any other way, and that all the children were born with an innate idea of going to school.

It should be added, however, that parents are not obliged to send their children to a *public* school; if they prefer it, the children may be sent to a *private* school; but they *must* be sent to some one. All teachers, however, of private as well as of public schools, must submit to an examination, and have a certificate of qualification from the government officer.

A very erroneous idea prevails with us, that this enforcement of school attendance is the prerogative of despotism alone. I believe it is generally supposed here, that such compulsion is not merely incompatible with, but impossible in, a free or elective government. This is a great error. With the exception of Austria, (including Bohemia,) and Prussia, almost all the other states of Germany have now constitutional governments. Many of them have an upper and lower house of assembly, like our Senate and House of Representatives. Whoever will attend the Parliament of Saxony, for instance, will witness as great freedom of debate as in any country in the world; and

no law can be passed but by a majority of the representatives, chosen by the people themselves. In the first school I visited, in Saxony, I heard a lesson "on government," in which all the great privileges secured to the Saxon people by their constitution were enumerated; and both teacher and pupils contrasted their present free condition with that of some other countries, as well as with that of their own ancestors, in a spirit of congratulation and triumph. The elective franchise in this and in several of the other states of Germany, is more generally enjoyed, that is, the restrictions upon it are less, than in some of the States of our own Union. And yet, in Saxony, years after the existence of this constitution, and when no law could be passed without the assent of the people's representatives, in Parliament assembled, a general code of School Laws was enacted, from the 143d section of which, I translate the following:—The title is,

UPON NEGLECT OF SCHOOL ATTENDANCE.—“1st. In every parish where there is a school union, there shall be a school messenger. In large parishes which are divided into many school districts, every school shall have a particular messenger, besides one for every school district.

“2d. Excepting on the common vacations, and on those weeks and days when there is no school, the school messenger must ask the teacher, on every school day, after the school hours, what children have been absent without an adequate excuse.

“3d. In places where there is but one school, the school messenger must ask this question at least twice a week, on Wednesdays and Saturdays, and require an account of the last three days.

“4th. The next morning, not later than an hour before the beginning of the morning school, the school messenger of every place must go to the parents of the absent and unexcused child, and demand him for the school, or else the reason for his absence. For every such visit the parent must give the messenger six pfennings.

“5th. If a child does not come after this demand, but remains away unexcused for two days, the school messenger must take him on the third day and conduct him to the school. The fee from the parents shall be one groschen.

“6th. A child of a place where there is but one school, who does not come on the Monday or Thursday after the visit of the school messenger, and remains unexcused; also if he stays away six days without adequate excuse, must be taken by the messenger and carried to the school, and the fee from the parents shall be two groschen.

“7th. If the child stays from the school with the knowledge of its parents after being thus carried to it by the messenger, measures for punishment must be taken.

“8th. If the messenger cannot collect his fees, he must apply to the magistrates, whose duty it is to coerce the payment.

“9th. If the parents are actually too poor to pay the same, the magistrates must demand payment quarterly from the school chest.

“10th. The magistracy must lend their assistance to the messenger if, without good reason, he is prevented from taking the child to school; or, if he is improperly treated while executing the duties of his office.”

In many of the German states, the anniversaries of the date of their Constitution are celebrated by fêtes and shows, by dinners and speeches, as we celebrate our great national festival, the Fourth of July; and yet, in these states, by virtue of laws which the free representatives of a free people have enacted, every child is compelled to attend school!

## HIGHER SCHOOLS.

This account of the People's Schools would be very imperfect, did I omit to mention one or two other classes among them, corresponding in grade with our town schools, or public high schools. These are the Real, and Burgher schools, which hold the same relation to the elementary schools, that our town schools hold to those of the districts.

The royal real school of Berlin,—the first in point of date,—was formed as early as 1747, by Counsellor Hecker. The epithet "real," is used in contradistinction from "learned." At the time when this school was established, Latin and Greek were the exclusive objects of study in the learned schools, and the avowed purpose in founding this was, that "not mere words should be taught to the pupils, but realities,—explanations being made to them from models and plans, and of subjects calculated to be useful in after-life." The establishment of this class of schools was the commencement of a great educational reform. Even now, the Germans could afford to barter any quantity of classical annotations, or of home-made Latin and Greek prose or verse, for enough of mechanical skill to make a good household utensil, a good farming tool, or a good machine. Doubtless, too, their best students would excogitate more philosophically by day, if they knew enough to sleep more physiologically at night; but this knowledge Latin and Greek do not give.

The special design of the Burgher school is to prepare young men to become citizens,—that is, to qualify them for the transaction of such municipal or other public affairs as they may be called upon to perform. The man, whose duty it may be to build bridges, to construct drains, to lay out streets or roads, to erect public buildings, to pass ordinances for the establishment or regulation of the police, and for the general administration of city or county affairs, should have some special preparation for duties so various and responsible; and the city which fails to educate those young men who are afterwards to perform such duties in her behalf, will find, in the end, that their mistakes, mismanagement, and want of economy, will cost a hundred times more than the original outlay which would have qualified them for such offices. In a country like ours, where all the citizens not only elect to office, but are themselves eligible, if education does not fit the great body of the people for the performance of these duties, it is clear that we must be constantly putting valuable trusts into the hands of incompetent trustees.

The above classes of schools are also schools for the useful arts, manufactures and commerce. In some of them, architecture, engineering, mining, &c., are taught; and the course of studies is susceptible of being enlarged to any extent, until they become complete polytechnic institutions.

I was so fortunate as to arrive at Cologne pending an examination of its Burgher School. One day had already been spent, but I was present on the morning of the second, before

the exercises commenced. A programme of the order of performances, accompanied by remarks and explanations on the course of studies and the methods of instruction, had been prepared for the use of examiners and visitors. It consisted of twenty-four printed folio pages,—a fact which shows the degree of attention devoted to the subject. The number and apparent standing and character of the visitors, ratified the inference which one would naturally draw from such a fact. From this programme it appeared that the subjects of examination were religion, the German (their native) language, the French, Latin, English, and Italian languages, history, geography, knowledge of nature, arithmetic and geometry, drawing, calligraphy and singing,—in all thirteen branches.

I shall speak only of that part of the examination which I heard.

In arithmetic, after a little time had been spent in expounding the mere relations of numbers, the pupils gave an account of the different weights and measures of the neighboring states; of the standard value of gold and silver, as determined by the laws of different nations; of the current coins of all the nations of Europe and of the United States of North America. They were then required to change coins of one denomination and country into those of another. After this they were examined in electro-magnetism, having apparatus on which to try experiments. A class of boys from thirteen to seventeen years of age, was then examined in the French and English languages. During the exercise in French, *both teacher and pupils spoke in French, and during the exercise in English, both teacher and pupils spoke in English.* These exercises consisted in translations, parsing and general remarks. The teacher's observations on the construction and genius of the English language would have done credit to a professor in one of our colleges. A want of time excluded examinations in Latin and Italian, but all that I saw and heard was performed so well as to create an assurance of ability to sustain an examination in any other branch set down in the programme. After this came declamation in three languages. In this exercise, I observed there was not a single gesticulation, nor any symptom of any internal impulse towards one. The lads took their station behind a table, which they seized with both hands and held steadfastly, until the close.

After the examination was completed, the head-teacher occupied half an hour in delivering an address, a part of which was directed to the young men who were about to leave the school, and a part to parents and visitors on their duties to it.\*

\* In a private school in Utrecht, composed of both masters and misses, I heard a lesson in English history, conducted principally in the French language. During the lesson, a boy was called to the blackboard, who traced down, in a diagram-form, in a manner similar to the great historical charts to be found in Lavoisne's Atlas, a regular succession of the English sovereigns, from the time of Edward III. to the present Queen. How valuable and permanent must history be when learned in this way.

In this school, four languages, the German, Dutch, French and English, were spoken promiscuously by both teachers and pupils, and each one of these languages seemed to be struggling to obtain its share of attention.

In many parts of the continent, evening schools are kept, which are attended by apprentices and others. In these schools, all branches of useful knowledge are taught. In Paris, I have seen men forty or fifty years of age in attendance, and diligently studying the branches appropriate to their respective occupations. Such schools occupy the place, to some extent, of our debating clubs and lyceums. The school communicates knowledge; the debating club and the lyceum suppose the actual possession of knowledge. Where this knowledge does not actually exist, is not the school preferable?

In some of the German states, the law requires apprentices to attend school a certain number of evenings in every week. In one of these states, I was informed that complaint had been made by the apprentices, because they were deprived of the disposal of their own time, and were obliged to defray the expense of tuition at school, out of their pocket-money. To obviate this complaint, the law was changed. All apprentices were still obliged to pay a tuition fee, but the government remitted the payment in favor of those who attended, exacting it only of the absentees.

In most, if not in all the German cities which I visited, I found Sunday Schools in active operation. These are established, not, as with us, for the purpose of giving moral or religious, but secular instruction. Their exercises consist mainly in reading, writing, composition, arithmetic, geography, drawing, and so forth. They are attended principally by apprentices, laborers, and others, whose age for attending the elementary schools has passed, and who are engaged, during the week days, in their respective industrial employments.

From what has been said, it will be observed, that there is a remarkable difference between the lads, or youth of Prussia, and our own, in regard to the nature and character of the literary exercises to which they betake themselves, after leaving the elementary schools. With us, they attend the lyceum, the debating society, the political reading room, or news room. There, notwithstanding the excellent instruction they have already received in the school, they seek to enlarge and carry forward their elementary knowledge, by attending the evening school and the Sunday school. Their course springs from the idea, that further preliminary knowledge is to be acquired; ours from the idea, that sufficient preliminary knowledge has already been obtained;—sufficient as a qualification to enter upon the business of life;—sufficient for the decision of all social and political questions. Before we give a decided preference to our own course, would it not be well to inquire whether the supposition on which it proceeds, is true?

In Prussia, Saxony, and some other of the German States, schools for further cultivation, as they are called, [fortbildungsschulen,] are rapidly increasing.

Having brought to a close what I propose to say respecting the spirit, and the methods of instruction prevalent in the German schools, perhaps it may not be wholly useless to others, who may make a similar tour of exploration, if I add, that after

leaving the north of Prussia and the kingdom of Saxony, I observed a slight falling off,—a declension, in the tone and conduct of the schools. This, however, was slight, until I approached the Rhine. But here, in the Grand Duchy of Nassau, of Hesse Darmstadt, of Baden; and in the cities of Coblenz, Cologne and Dusseldorf,—although the same general system was everywhere in operation, yet its body was not animated and informed by so active and zealous a soul.

The above view of the condition, and of the degree of influence exerted upon the national character, by the Prussian schools, would be incomplete without a few general remarks.

The question is sometimes asked, why, with such a wide-extended and energetic machinery for public instruction, the Prussians, as a people, do not rise more rapidly in the scale of civilization; why the mechanical and useful arts remain among them in such a half-barbarous condition; why the people are so sluggish and unenterprising in their character; and, finally, why certain national vices are not yet extirpated.

These questions may be readily answered. *First.* It is a great defect in the *People's* schools of Prussia, that the children leave them at so early an age. At fourteen, when the mind, by blending its own reflections with the instructions of an accomplished teacher, is perhaps in the very best state for making rapid advances, the child is withdrawn from school, and his progress suddenly arrested. The subsequent instruction of the evening school and the Sunday school, reaches but a small part of the rural population.

*Secondly.* There is a great dearth of suitable books for the reading of the older children or younger men. Notwithstanding the multitude of publications sent forth annually from the prolific German brain, but very few of them are adapted to the youthful mind; and that great instrumentality for operating in every place, however secluded or remote, and for elevating every individual, however indigent or obscure,—THE DISTRICT SCHOOL LIBRARY,—has hardly yet been heard of in the kingdom. Hence there is a failure of mental nutriment on which the common people can thrive. Whenever I mentioned our own plan of School Libraries, it struck all,—whether teachers, school officers, or friends of free and progressive institutions,—as one of the grand desiderata for carrying forward the public mind in its career of improvement. I have the happiness to believe that our course on this subject will not only diffuse blessings by its direct agency at home, but will enlarge into a wide circle of beneficence by the effect of its example abroad.

The Prussians have political newspapers, but these are under a rigorous censorship. There are but few of them, and their size is very small. One of our mammoth sheets would nearly supply a Prussian editor for a year.

*Thirdly.* But the most potent reason for Prussian backwardness and incompetency is this;—when the children come out from the school, they have little use either for the faculties that have been developed, or for the knowledge that has been acquired. Their resources are not brought into demand; their

powers are not roused and strengthened by exercise. Our common phrases, "the active duties of life;" "the responsibilities of citizenship;" "the stage, the career of action;" "the obligations to posterity," would be strange-sounding words in a Prussian ear. There, government steps in to take care of the subject, almost as much as the subject takes care of his cattle. The subject has no officers to choose, no inquiry into the character or eligibleness of candidates to make, no vote to give. He has no laws to enact or abolish. He has no questions about peace or war, finance, taxes, tariffs, post-office, or internal improvement, to decide or discuss. He is not asked where a road shall be laid, or how a bridge shall be built, although in the one case he has to perform the labor, and in the other to supply the materials. His sovereign is born to him. The laws are made for him. In war, his part is not to declare it or to end it, but to fight and be shot in it, and to pay for it. The tax-gatherer tells him how much he is to pay. The ecclesiastical authority plans a church which he must build; and his spiritual guide, who has been set over him by another, prepares a creed and a confession of faith all ready for his signature. He is directed alike how he must obey his king, and worship his God. Now, although there is a sleeping ocean in the bosom of every child that is born into the world, yet if no freshening, life-giving breeze ever sweeps across its surface, why should it not repose in dark stagnation forever?

Many of our expensively educated citizens will understand *too well* what I mean, in saying that when they came from the schools, and entered upon the stage of life, they had a *practical* education to begin. Though possessed of more lore than they could recite, yet it was of a kind unavailable in mart or counting-room; and they still had the a, b, c, of a business education to commence. What, then, must be the condition of a people, to the great body of whom not even this late necessity ever comes?

Besides, it was not until the beginning of the present century, that the Prussian peasantry were emancipated from a condition of absolute vassalage. Who could expect that the spirit of a nation, which centuries of despotism had benumbed and stupefied, could at once resume its pristine vigor and elasticity?

*Fourthly.* As it respects the vices of the Prussians, the same remark applies to them as to those of all the continental nations of Europe;—they are the vices of the sovereign and of the higher classes of society, copied by the lower, without the decorations which gilded them in their upper sphere. Mr. Laing, (the same author before referred to,) says:

"Of all the virtues, that which the domestic family education of both sexes most obviously influences,—that which marks more clearly than any other the moral condition of a society,—the home state of moral and religious principles, the efficiency of those principles in it, and the amount of that moral restraint upon passion and impulses, which it is the object of education and knowledge to attain,—is undoubtedly female chastity.

"Will any traveller, will any Prussian say, that this index-

virtue of the moral condition of a people, is not lower in Prussia, than in almost any part of Europe?"

This, says Mr. Laing, "is a fact not to be denied, when the fruits of this educational system *may be appreciated in the generation of the adults.*" Allowing the accusation to be true,—which, however, so far as it gives to Prussia a criminal preëminence over many other continental nations, may well be questioned,—and can anything surpass the absurdity of expecting, that a deep-seated vice of this description can be extirpated, in a single age, by the influence of any education, however perfect, or by any other human means of reform, whatever? It would be a revolution such as was never yet wrought in so short a period, even by miracles; no, not even under the Jewish theocracy, when men looked to the Omnipotent himself for the execution and the avengement of the laws. Could so fatal a canker in the social body be so easily eradicated from it, the criminality of sovereigns and of the high-born, of princes and of nobles, would be infinitely less than it now is, for spreading so virulent a vice among the lower orders by the contagion of their own example, or for allowing its existence by their neglect. The vicious indulgences of the elevated descend through all the grades of society beneath them; and the bitterest drop in the cup of their abominations, is that which flows forward and pollutes the blood of generations yet unborn. Besides, what man of conscientiousness,—of an awakened moral sense,—can sympathize with denunciations levelled at the poor and ignorant, while those who dwell in high places and give the law to society escape unrebuked! Before the pure spirit of justice, the worst debaucheries and licentiousness that ever reeked in the stews of Athens are less criminal than the amours and obscenities of the gods on Olympus. Throughout the whole history of mankind, the vices of the low have been only *vulgarized* copies and editions of the profligacies of their social superiors,—the coarse penny prints of the illuminated and voluptuous originals of kingly and courtly sensualism.

A proverb has now obtained currency in Prussia, which explains the whole mystery of the relation between their schools and their life: "THE SCHOOL IS GOOD, THE WORLD IS BAD." The quiescence or torpidity of social life stifles the activity excited in the schoolroom. Whatever pernicious habits and customs exist in the community, act as antagonistic forces against the moral training of the teacher. The power of the government presses upon the partially-developed faculties of the youth, as with a mountain's weight. Still, in knowledge and in morality, in the intellect and in the conscience, there is an expansive force which no earthly power can overcome. Though rocks and mountains were piled upon it, its imprisoned might will rend them asunder, and heave them from their bases, and achieve for

[To be continued.]